Written Answers to Starred Questions

Exploration for Gold Deposits

*264. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of gold deposits being explored in the country at present;

(b) whether the Kolar Gold Field have been abandoned by Government; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) Geological Survey of India (GSI) is a premier organisation in the field of Earth Sciences engaged inter-alia in the exploraion of the gold deposits in the country. During current field session of October, 96 to September, 97; GSI has undertaken 50 field investigations for gold. Besides, Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL), Hutti Gold Mines Company Limited (HBML), Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL), Bharat Gold Mines Limited (BGML), State Directorates of Mining and Geology also undertake exploration work for locating the gold deposits in the country. Private companies registered in India can also undertake exploration/exploitation of the gold deposits as per the National Mineral Policy, 1993 and Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957.

(b) and (c) The Government have decided to explore the possibility of rehabilitating Bharat Gold Mines Limited (BGML) through the induction of private co-promoter(s) under the joint venture route failing which only the company will be allowed to be wound up under the provisions of the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985.

Atrocities committed on Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes in Tamil Nadu

*265. SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of atrocities committed on Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes in Tamil Nadu during 1996 and 1997 so far;

(b) the action Government have taken thereon; and

(c) the number of persons arrested and prosecuted and the nature of action taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) The number of cases of atrocities commited against Scheduled Castes in Tamil Nadu during 1996 and 1997 are 535 and 372 respectively.

(b) The State Government of Tamil Nadu are taking the following steps to prevent atrocities committed against Scheduled Castes:—

(i) The guidelines issued from the Government of India in 1980 and 1985 have been circulated to all the Districts for strict compliance.

(ii) Guidelines for preventive action were formulated and circulated.

(iii) The Protection of Civil Rights Cell monitors the compliance of instructions on the part of the District Police Officials as given in two Government Orders.

(iv) Reporting and progress of investigation of atrocity cases (those of P.C.R. Units and of